21st CCLC Competitive Grant Application Q & A
The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) office has recently released their competitive grant application. As questions about the application process are received, the NDDPI 21st CCLC office will answer these questions formally by posting a Q & A. This will be done to ensure the answers provided remain consistent and equitable. It will be the intention of the NDDPI 21st CCLC office to update this document every two business days or as necessary.

Q: Is there a needs assessment tool applicants must use or do grant applicants need to create one on their own?
A: Since every applicant will have different needs and variables within their community, the NDDPI does not provide a standard needs assessment tool. Each applicant will have to create their own assessment to identify the needs of the community.

Q: What month should be used to identify free and reduced numbers?
A: Applicants can use any month within the fiscal year of the competitive process up to the month in which the grant application is due. (July 2015-April 2016)

Q: What is the definition of highly rural?
A: The NDDPI 21st CCLC state office defines "highly rural" as any school district that is eligible for the REAP-Flex and SRSA grants. The eligibility requirements of these two programs are listed below:
1. Have fewer than 600 students in average daily attendance during the prior school year, or serve only schools that are in counties with a population density less than 10 persons per square mile; and
2. Serve only schools that have a Federal NCES locale code of 7 or 8, or that are located in an area that meets the definition of "rural' of a governmental agency of the state.

The following is a link to a map of all the school districts in North Dakota and they are identified as rural and non-rural:
http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/PDF/states/ND.pdf

Q: How should private school students be counted towards the recommended per pupil calculation and number of students to be served?
A: Please refer to the private school guidance on the NDDPI 21st CCLC website.

Q: Should I use the total school enrollment be used when determining the number of students to be served?
A: Applicants will be held accountable to number of regular attendees expected to be served as stated in their application. This is a number that each applicant will have to research carefully. It is not recommended to use the school's total enrollment as the number of expected regular attendees an applicant expects to serve is very unlikely a school's entire enrollment will attend the after-school program regularly.
*A "regular attendee" is classified as any attendee who attends the program for thirty or more days.

Q: Is a private business considered as an LEA?
A: No, LEA's are local education agencies. They are the school districts.

Q: What is Title I?
A: Title I is a program designed to assist struggling students, who attend high poverty school districts, in math and reading. Title I schools can fall into two categories, Targeted or schoolwide. If a school is targeted, Title I funds must be focused on the identified Title I students based on the schools selection criteria. If a school is schoolwide, the schools can use a Schoolwide approach when using their Title I funds.

Q: When developing a consortium, what does it take to become a partner. Does Sylvan qualify as partnership agreement?
A: All entities must have a partnership agreement with the sub-grantee. Sylvan can be a partner. Partnerships are encourage and should be a part of the sub-grantees sustainability plan. It is up to the partner and sub-grantee to determine the details of the arrangement.

Q: Have the operating hours for after school program changed?
A: Yes, the required hours have changed from 12 to 7 hours to assist prospective applicants with the transportation issues that come from being in a rural state.

Q: Is the letter of intent required?
A: No, the letter of intent is not a binding agreement, so the letter of intent is not required.

Q: Do all of the school and/or applicants have to create their own program that is 65% academic?
A: The NDDPI 21st CCLC program requires sub-grantees to align their program to the regular school day and the state standards. This can be done a number of ways. The state does not write curriculum or endorse programs. It is up to the sub-grantee to determine how and what resources they will use to meet the requirements of the 21st CCLC grant. Sub-grantees can write their own curriculum or purchase curriculum programs; again this is a decision that will need to be made at the sub-grantee level.

Q: Does the scoring rubric need to be submitted with the application?
A: No. The scoring rubric provides a means for reviewers to objectively review 21st CCLC applications. The scoring rubric may be helpful to applicants to ensure that all components of the application are included before submitting for review. Use it as a guide.

Q: The budget and budget narrative on the application requests a budget summary for year one only. Do we need to include a budget for years two and three?
A: No. the amount awarded to each sub-grantee will be the amount they receive annually. A budget narrative for years two and three will be done when the sub-grantee submits their continuing application. The budget for year one will be reduced by two months as year one will be a 10 month grant.

Q: Do all goals need to be linked to state standards? Or can they be linked to neutral environments?
A: All goals, outcomes, and objectives must be directly linked to the state standards.

Q: The activities and objectives are linked to SBR. Must we source the SBR?
A: When necessary, applicants need to provide evidence that the activities are based in SBR. The only way to provide this evidence is by sourcing that the activity or program is supported by SBR.

Q: Who determines the area to be served?
A: The applicant determines how they want to apply with the exception of REAs. REAs are required to contact all eligible LEAs to see if they would want to apply with the REA since the REAs are an umbrella entity for LEAs in their region. Under no circumstance are schools required to apply with the REA. Schools may apply as an individual entity if they meet the eligible entity requirements.

Q: The application states on pages 7 and 19 that centers should be open at a minimum of three hours a day and at least four days a week. Does this really change anything from the previous requirement of 12 hours?
A: The purpose of reducing the hours of programming from 12 to 7 is to allow sub-grantees the ability to get their students home at a reasonable time due to the lengthy transportation time for a large number of the program attendees. Applicants need to use the following requirements when writing the application in regard to hours of operation and disregard the statement in the application on pages 7 and 19.
1. A center must be open a minimum of 7 hours per week.
2. During the school year, the hours of programming are not to exceed three hours a day.
3. During summer school, the hours of programming are not to exceed the daily hours that students would attend school during the regular school year.

Q: Does the authorized representative have to be approved by the board and must the approval be in the board minutes?
A: Yes. Any eligible entity that is going to be the fiscal agent of the 21st CCLC program must have a governing board. The authorized representative must be identified in the board minutes of the eligible entity that is identified as the fiscal agent. Applicants must attach a copy of the board minutes that identifies who has the authority to sign the required 21st CCLC documents. Since this is a new application, updated board minutes must be submitted identifying who the authorized representative will be for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

Q: Is it acceptable to budget for a laptop for a site coordinator?
A: Yes. Sub-grantees can purchase a laptop for a full-time site coordinator as they are required to enter a significant amount of program data.

Q: Is submitting the letter of intent binding?
A: No. A letter of intent is used only to assist the NDDPI in estimating the number of peer reviewers that will be required.

Q: Do we have to use the same month for every school in the REA to identity free and reduced numbers?
A: Yes. Applicants are submitting one application as a consortium, thus creating one sub-grantee. Therefore, the month applicants decide to use must be consistent for all members of the consortium.

Q: Does the administrator or the fiscal agent decide on how the 5% set-aside for administration is spent?
A: This should be a cooperative decision. In the situation that the program administrator and fiscal agent are different entities, they are required to create an agreement on how the set-aside will be distributed, if they choose to set-aside any of the grant dollars.

Q: Can we reference the state monitoring plan in our application or does it need to be part of our application?
A: The state monitoring plan is an example of what a monitoring plan should look like. Applicants should use it as a guide to assist in writing a monitoring plan. Under no circumstances are applicants allowed to attach the state plan and use it as their own.

Q: Can we set aside funds in our budget for database expenses?
A: Yes. The NDDPI 21st CCLC office is currently in the process of creating a Information Technology Request for Proposal for a statewide data entry tool. The sub-grantees will pay the licensing fee for whichever company wins the bid.

Q: Is it the REA's responsibility to transport private school students to the after school program?
A: Yes. The 21st CCLC guidance requires all sub-grantees to address the transportation needs of the students that will attend the program. If a private school is not going to operate their own site, the sub-grantee is responsible for making arrangements to get the eligible students to the appropriate site to attend the 21st CCLC program.

Q: Are private schools required to administer the state assessments?
*A: No. Although most private schools administer the North Dakota State Assessment, applicants are not allowed to include in their application the requirement for private schools, who currently do not have the students take the state assessment, to take the state assessment. *

Q: Are sub-grantees bound to the sustainability plan submitted in the application or can it be revised from year to year?
A: Applicants are not bound to their sustainability plan as things will change. A sustainability plan should be an evolving document.

Q: Are attachments counted towards the 20-page limit required in the application submission?
A: No, The grant application instructions identify only certain attachments that can be included in the application. Since applicants are required to provide a number of data sources, the NDDPI believes it should amend the application instructions to allow the required data sources to be included as attachments and will not count towards the 20-page maximum as the narrative

should explain the data sources applicants attach. Examples of attachments that can be included are: data sources, lesson plans, daily schedules, partnership agreements, consortium documents, SBR sourcing, and private school consultation.

Q: Is each reviewer going to review a pool of applications or is each reviewer going to review ALL applications submitted?
A: Each reviewer will receive a pool of applications.

Q: In the written narrative, can the statement *"see attachment" be included* (for example, "see appendices 1, 2, 3, etc.")?
A: Yes. The application process requires a number of data sources and additional documents. For this reason, applicants have these documents as attachments and should reference them in the narrative. However, the narrative should first address the question and then reference the attachments as a resource.

Q: Do the budget narrative and budget summary need to be included in the narrative?
A: The budget narrative is not counted as part of the program narrative and the 20-page maximum.

Q: What is the definition of a partner?
A: A partner is any organization that is willing to provide services to a 21st CCLC program and has a partnership agreement on file.

Q: How do applicants address how they will ensure the protection of privacy rights of students and their families?
A: Applicants need state in the narrative they will address protection of privacy rights. This can be a statement saying they will assure they will follow requirements of FERPA.

Q: Must or can the cost of evaluation be budgeted for?
A: No. The NDDPI 21st CCLC State office contracts with an independent evaluator to perform sub-grantee evaluations. This is done to ensure consistent statewide evaluations of each sub-grantee. In addition, hiring an evaluator to perform the required monitoring to meet the EDGAR 80.40 regulation (which states sub-grantees are required to monitor) is a non-allowable expenditure since the regulation says "sub-grantees are required to monitor".

Q: Under the Quality Design section, what is the definition of inputs and outputs?
A: Inputs are the resources applicants are going to need to run and operate the program. Outputs are going to be the individuals expected to be reached (e.g. adult learners, students, families, etc.).

Q: Can the state determine what the applicant's goals should be?
A: It is not the responsibility of the state to determine what an applicant's goals should be. The state has provided the grant requirements. The goals must be linked to the state standards.

Q: Are private school students eligible to participate in 21st CCLC activities carried out in public schools?
Yes. Students, teachers, and other educational personnel are eligible to participate in 21st CCLC programs on an equitable basis. A public school or other public or private organization that is awarded a grant must provide equitable services to private school students, and their families. In designing a program that meets this requirement, grantees must provide comparable opportunities for the participation of both public- and private-school students in the area served by the grant. Grantees must consult with private school officials during the design and development of the 21st CCLC program on issues such as how the children's needs will be identified and what services will be offered. Services and benefits provided to private school students must be secular, neutral, and non-ideological.
Students are determined eligible for 21st CCLC if their school is operating as Title I schoolwide or has a poverty percentage of 40% or greater based upon free/reduced lunch. To summarize, any grantee of a 21st CCLC grant must offer its services to private school students residing in public school attendance areas where the public school is operating as Title I schoolwide or has a poverty percentage of 40% or greater based on upon free/reduced lunch.

Q: What is the allowable administrative set aside?
Sub-grantees can set aside up to 5% of their grant award for administrative purposes.

Q: What education categories meet the 65% requirement?
English Language Arts and STEAM all count towards the 65% academic requirement. STEAM is science, technology, engineering, arts, and math.

Q: Does the 65% requirement apply to only the required 7 hours of programming?
The 65% applies to programming hours. Whether to program operates 7 hours or 15 hours, the sub-grantee is required to focus 65% of the activities in the English Language Arts and STEAM.